

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing failure messages for email messages, the method comprising:  
~~determining a plurality of rules that classify failure messages in a plurality of failure types;~~  
receiving a failure message from an Internet service provider (ISP) when the ISP is unable to deliver sending an email message to an email address associated with the ISP; an Internet service provider (ISP);  
~~determining a failure message for the email message;~~  
~~determining a rule in the plurality of rules that applies to the failure message; and~~  
~~determining, for the failure message, a failure type in the plurality of failure types~~  
based on [[the]] a determined rule for classifying the failure message; and  
performing an action in response to receiving the failure message,  
wherein the action is determined at least in part based upon the determined failure type and the ISP associated with the email address.
- 2 - 3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[3]] 1 , wherein the action comprises marking the email address as invalid.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[2]] 1 , wherein the action comprises storing information for the email address based on the failure type determined.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of rules include rules for a plurality of ISPs, wherein the rules for the ISP associated with the email address are used to determine the failure type.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of rules each include information for a failure message, wherein determining the rule that applies to the failure message comprises comparing content of the failure message to the information for the rules to determine a rule that includes information that matches the content of the failure message.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the failure message comprises a failure message that is determined before delivery of the email message.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the failure message comprises a failure message email message that is determined after delivery of the email message.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the failure message comprises a failure message sent by the ISP.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for categorizing failure messages from a plurality of Internet service providers (ISPs), the method comprising:

~~determining a plurality of failure types;~~

~~determining a plurality of sets of rules for the failure types that categorize a failure message into a failure type, wherein each ISP in the plurality of ISPs is associated with a set of rules in the plurality of rules;~~

receiving a failure message corresponding to an email address associated with a corresponding [[an]] ISP of the plurality of ISPs when the corresponding ISP is unable to deliver an email message to the email address;

determining a set of rules that is associated with the corresponding ISP for classifying the failure message;

~~determining a failure type of the failure message based on a determined rule of the set of rules for the corresponding ISP; and rule in the set of rules associated with the ISP for the failure message; and~~

~~performing an action in response to receiving the failure message;~~

~~wherein the action is determined at least in part based upon the determined failure type and the corresponding ISP associated with the email address.~~

~~determining a failure type associated with the rule.~~

13 - 14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[14]]~~ 12, wherein determining if the email address should be marked as invalid based on the invalidation rule comprises marking the email address as invalid if a failure message for the failure type has been received a certain number of times.

16. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising storing information for the email address indicating the failure message of the determined failure type was received.

17. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the rule includes information for a failure message, wherein determining the rule that applies to the failure message comprises comparing content of the failure message to the information for the failure message for the rules to determine a rule that includes information that matches the content of the failure message.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for categorizing failure messages, the method comprising:

~~determining a plurality of failure types for failure messages;~~

~~receiving a failure message from an Internet Service Provider (ISP) when the ISP is unable to deliver sending an email message to an email address associated with the ISP; an Internet service provider (ISP);~~

~~determining a failure message for the email message; and~~

determining, for the failure message, a failure type ~~in the plurality of failure types~~;  
and  
performing an action in response to receiving the failure message,  
wherein the action is determined at least in part based upon the determined failure  
type and the corresponding ISP associated with the email address.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein determining the plurality of failure types comprises determining a plurality of sets of rules, wherein ISPs in a plurality of ISPs are associated with a set of rules, the rules in each set of rules corresponding to failure types in the plurality of failure types.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein determining the failure message comprising:  
determining a set of rules that is associated with the ISP;  
determining a rule in the determined set of rules that is associated with the failure message; and  
determining a failure type associated with the rule.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein determining the rule comprising comparing the rules to content of the failure message to determine a rule that includes information that matches the content of the failure message.

22 - 23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[23]]~~ 18, wherein the action comprises marking the email address as invalid.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[23]]~~ 18, wherein the action comprises storing information for the email address based on the failure type determined.

27. (Currently Amended) A system for classifying failure messages, the system comprising:

~~a plurality of Internet service providers (ISPs); and~~

a failure message processor configured to process failure messages associated with a plurality of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) ~~an ISP~~, the failure message processor comprising:

logic to receive a failure message corresponding to an email address associated with a corresponding ISP of the plurality of ISPs when the corresponding ISP is unable to deliver an email message to the email address;

~~a plurality of sets of rules that categorize failure messages into a failure type, wherein each ISP in the plurality of ISPs is associated with a set of rules;~~

~~logic to determine a failure message associated with an ISP;~~

logic to determine a set of rules that is associated with the corresponding ISP for classifying the failure message;

~~logic to determine a rule in the set of rules associated with the ISP for the failure message; and~~

logic to determine a failure type of the failure message based on a determined rule of the determined set of rules for the corresponding ISP; ~~associated with the rule~~

logic to determine an email address associated with the failure message;  
and

logic to determine if the email address should be marked as invalid based on the failure type determined and the corresponding ISP associated with the email address,

wherein the logic to determine if the email address should be invalidated comprises:

logic to determine a set of invalidation rules that is associated at least in part with the corresponding ISP and the determined failure type; and

logic to determine if the email address should be marked as invalid based on the invalidation rule.

28 - 29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[29]]~~ 27, wherein the logic to determine if the email address should be marked as invalid based on the invalidation rule comprises logic to mark the email address as invalid if a failure message for the failure type has been received a certain number of times.

31. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the failure message processor further comprises logic to store information for the email address indicating the failure message of the determined failure type was received.